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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Why I Am an Atheist

By CHARLES G. BROWN.

I am an Atheist because I'm built on such
a plan,
I can't believe absurdities, or make be-
lieve I can;
For an eternal Universe is easier in
thought
Than one made by a self-made God and
both made out of naught.
I can't accept theology that's founded on
a devil
That was created by a God that does
things on a level.

I can't believe one God is three, or that
three Gods are one,
That one lived all eternity and then begot
a son;
I can't believe pure virgins have babies by
ghosts begot,
It ought to be a crime to preach such silly
tommy-rot.
I am an Atheist because I've never seen
a God,
Or heard, or smelt, or tasted one, or seen
where one has trod.

Phenomena's no proof of God, nor flowers,
nor birds, nor grain;
No mind can act or thought can spring
apart from nerve and brain.
Eternal energy exists, must follow cause,
But no eternal, brainless God's revealed
in Nature's laws.
I am an Atheist because I'm not a hyp-
ocrite,
Am not looking for infinnence or trade a
"little bit."

I'd rather be my honest self and free to
think and speak,
Than be a President and know I was a
moral sneak.
I can't believe "Atoning blood," that
scheme vicarious,
Will "cut much ice" on that "great day"
and I don't care a "cuss,"
Who'd wash his vileness in the blood of an
"Atoning Lamb"
Will steal the jewels from the crown of
every saint he can.

I am an Atheist because I read within the
word,
That Christ came not sweet peace to bring
—but to set up a sword;
Because theology has brought to suffering
mankind
More persecution, wars and strife than all
things else combined.
I am an Atheist because I can't make it
appear,
That Gods would "mock calamity" or
"laugh" at honest fear.

I can't conceive a God so base as to con-
nive or wink
At witchcraft, slaves, polygamy, which
make the Bible stink.
I can't conceive a "God of Wrath," a
"God of Vengeance" dire,
Who sits and sniffs the incense sweet of
damned souls in hell fire.
—Rev. xiv., 9.11.
I can't believe this hell idea—I can't a
a little jot,
A lake of fire and brimstone'd be for
Esquimaux too hot.

I am an Atheist because I like the precept
true—
"Do unto others as you'd have all others
do to you."
I try my best to live up to this Heathen-
Christian rule,
I seek the reason in all things and don't
care who "keeps school."
I am an Atheist because I say with "bra-
zen face,"
I do believe that character is more than
"saving grace."

"Morality will damn your soul?" All
right, just let it rain,
I'll take my chances with Soerates, with
Bruno and Tom Paine.
I am an Atheist because I'd have my hea-
ven here,
And for "skyscrapers" never wait "to
read my title clear."
But why I am an Atheist I can't begin
to tell,
The world could not contain the books, nor
heaven, nor even hell.

Name and Aim

Progressive Human Elements Considered.—Timely Review of Existing Conditions.—Science Has Greater Liberty in Europe than in America.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

The history of progress illustrates the old truth that in unity lies strength,—in division, weakness.

Every step on the road to civilization has been preceded by many futile efforts, owing to insufficient power of the progressive elements, which were either inferior in numbers or divided among themselves, which amounts to the same in effect. This latter condition prevails at the present day, for considering the extent to which rational views about the world and its inhabitants have supplanted the old religious traditions, it seems rather strange that the beneficent effect upon our social institutions, which ought to be expected as the natural consequence, is so little in evidence.

Most of the liberties we enjoy today were attained at the end of the 18th and in the first half of the 19th century, before the great mechanical inventions and scientific discoveries of which we are so inordinately proud, had been made. It cannot be said that Darwin's most important discovery has resulted in any immediate social reforms, and it would be strange indeed if such was the case, because the material conditions render impossible a sudden magic transformation of a social order based on ancient, deeply-rooted traditions. But in due time it will effect great changes, and in science it has already revolutionized the basis on which scientific researches and theories are made.

It is a remarkable fact that in our own country there has been less social progress since the foundation of the republic than in most advanced countries in Europe, where personal liberty and democratic government have steadily gained ground. Aside from the splendid material development of this country, owing to its immense natural resources and their unrestricted exploitation, the government has steadily degenerated and liberty is giving way to tyranny, which often causes the down-trodden nations to wonder. Organized bodies take advantage of our defective method of legislation to acquire control of the natural resources and public utilities, making thereby the mass of the people tributary to the few.

The courts of justice do not protect the weak against the stronger; they are merely devices to give some individual an opportunity to acquire a greater share of the common wealth than others could obtain by more useful work. People with imperfectly developed mental functions and moral conception, but physically strong by organization, dictate to others how to regulate their individual life,—what to drink, what to read, and how to dispose of their time. Perhaps it is not generally known that our stupid laws leave the censorship of scientific books in regard to their moral standing to the arbitrary option of any time to be denounced as obscene and their owners fined. It has ass or fool who may have been appointed to such an office by political influence. All the works on sexual diseases and especially on the art of midwifery or obstetrics, are liable at any actually happened that a citizen of this free country has been fined and imprisoned for having in his possession one of the best foreign illustrated medical works. Already have American publishers commenced to omit in anatomical works the pictures of certain human organs, which the prude, hypocritical church

members cannot view without experiencing any other than the erotic sensations suggested by their libidinous, lascivious proclivities. *

Science does not enjoy the same liberty to search for and proclaim the truth as in some European countries, and as the inevitable results it is badly mixed with fraud and humbug and used for mercenary purposes. Here in California, for instance, any humbug is recognized by the Legislature if it commands enough money to buy political power. The laws regulating the practice of medicine are stupid and uncertain, and instead of serving the purpose to exclude quacks, they are used to exclude legitimate competition for the benefit of certain individuals.

All this is known to the people. The news in the daily papers consist principally of accidents, scandals and crimes of all kinds, and the farces enacted in the courts, of which the latter are the cause. An appearance of righteous indignation is kept up by the papers supposed to voice public opinion, but nothing is done; the people feel their helplessness and pretend to consider the permission to squeal when they are robbed the greatest liberty they can enjoy. But not all; there are always a few truthful, sensible persons who are able to read the signs of the times and know from history what will be the inevitable result when abuses are carried so far that their efforts become materially unbearable.

The laws of society are the same all over the world; the evils are the same and also the remedies. Ignorance of cause and effect, which finds expression in the various religions, is the fundamental evil which prevents man from living as well as his natural environments would permit him, and the first step of reform must be the substitution of these errors by rational views. It is an encouraging sign that societies are being organized for this purpose; they will do some good, but they could do more if they agreed upon a certain object and combined to accomplish it. There are at least four societies here in San Francisco professing to pursue the same object, but differing in some minor points, which prevent them from consolidating for co-operation. Especially the declaration of the Materialist Society: "There is no god and no future life," has been subject to criticism and is called "orthodox" by some persons who like to pose as radical Liberals. In the face of the positive assertion by the church that there is a god and a future life, without any tangible proof whatever, it does not seem presumptuous to make a positive assertion to the contrary, for not only are all the facts which make us cognizant of the existence of a thing missing, but normal reasoning rejects such an assumption as impossible.

We are accustomed to express our strong convictions by a positive or negative statement on many occasions when it is less justifiable than in this case, because an attempt to imagine such a being as the Christian standard god of the bible leads to absurd propositions and is simply impossible. Practically it does not make any difference whether we deny outright the existence of this intellectual monstrosity, or give it the benefit of the doubt and say we do not know, it does not matter as long as we leave him out of our human affairs and do not attempt to hold him responsible for the mistakes and crimes of man. In the application of the false and unnatural teachings of religion to our social life lies the danger and any one working for their exclusion promotes progress, be he known as an infidel, atheist, agnostic, or by any other name. The term "Materialist" may

be properly applied to everybody; that is what we are and must be, because we cannot help it.

But it is frequently conceived in a sense quite different from the definition given by comrade J. Frantz in his strong and lucid reply to Mr. J. Mattock, in No. 51 of the Blade, and it is not an uncommon occurrence to hear one of the safety philosophers (who have not the courage of a definite opinion and seem to be a cross between a Jesuit and a Jesuit) describe a Materialist as a person who is satisfied with eating, drinking, and denying god and then annihilate him—fortunately only in mind and not in body.

Although a true conception of the world and its creatures is the initial step for the emancipation from the relics of barbarism with which our civilization is still encumbered, we must not imagine that mere knowledge is sufficient to accomplish this task; it is necessary to carry it out in justice or else it is worthless. What an application of our modern rational views signifies, is clearly demonstrated in Judge Ladd's excellent article, "Criticism on Government," in No. 52 of the Blade. It is a very gratifying, but unfortunately rare event, to meet with a member of the legal profession who still takes an interest in the welfare of the people, and whose social consciousness has not been superseded by the callous, mercenary principles of his vocation. Only when such ideas as he advances and such reforms as he proposes are generally accepted and introduced, can we look for permanently better times.

While it is comparatively easy to point out the causes of our social evils and suggest a remedy, to induce a nation to carry out an act of reform is so difficult that (as we know from history) an abuse is usually permitted to become unbearable before it is abolished. Every social institution is of benefit to somebody, whose interest it is to maintain it, and as long as those who suffer by it are not strong enough to force its abolition, it will remain. It is the lack of social instinct, (some would prefer social psychology) or rational patriotism, which forms the greatest obstacle to reform. We make a wonderful display of patriotism against the foreigners, always boasting of our liberties and ready to resent any insult of the flag with the sword, but at home we meekly submit to being robbed and enslaved, and crawl before the man who says: "The people be damned." And the people have no reason to complain; they have no money for men to do the work necessary for reform, but they have millions for men who play ball or give each other black eyes.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to make a few comments on Mr. A. E. Wade's criticism of the mental attitude of my comrade in arms, J. Frantz. If I am not mistaken, the three cases of Lincoln, the Irish Saint and Mrs. Eddy are offered as proof of the existence of god and a future life, and under this supposition I will review the evidence.

Granting that Lincoln was a Spiritualist,—what about it? It would not detract a particle from his merits, his works that made his name immortal. It is what a man does, not what he believes, that constitutes his value as a member of society, and if Lincoln had been a Mohammedan or Catholic, his deeds would be just as great. But all the same, his belief in Spiritualism would not convince me of its truth. I want facts as proof.

That "Joan of Arc" and "Holy Ann" heard voices seems not impossible; such things may happen in certain nervous disorders, but such hearsay evidence cannot be accepted as fact in the court of truth.

Concerning Mrs. Eddy's work, I am afraid Mr. Wade presents a weak case if the facts are not based on any better evidence than "any sworn testimony in court." An oath administered in court is nothing but an empty form, and as a means of ascertaining the truth, a total failure. The word of an honest man cannot be improved by an oath, and a liar will not be coerced by it to tell the truth. So little faith have the judges and

lawyers in this "holy sacrament" that they do not expect witnesses to tell any of the "truth" except that which will benefit the party in whose interest they testify, and who often pay them for their services.

I believe our friend Wade is too honest for this world, and believes others to be the same. But I accept his statement that some people have been cured by the application of Christian Science. There is a group of physical disorders caused by the reaction of the mind upon the body which may be relieved by employing strong impulses and emotions as a remedy to correct the abnormal functions. It matters little by what means they are produced, and a sudden fright has sometimes caused a wonderful effect. These results of the mutual dependence and intimate relations between the mental and physical organs have heretofore been entirely neglected by the medical science, but their importance is being recognized and the matter investigated. All the miraculous cures of ancient and modern times must be ascribed to physiological changes effected through the influence of the controlling nerve center. The field for this method of healing is, however, very limited, and giving Christian Science due credit for curing all cases of this kind that come under its care, there is no doubt that they would appear a poor offset only against the evil that has been caused by the absurd and dangerous teachings of the queen of dupes—Mrs. B. G. Eddy.

To deny conditions which in obstetrics and surgery mean certain death if not removed by certain methods of science, is simply criminal or idiotic, and many lives have been lost and often health has been ruined by following the advice of that conceited false prophet. I have seen the results of an investigation of several hundred cases reported as cured by Christian Science, and it was found that those who were well did not have an organic disease, and all the results were unreliable, because the diagnoses were made by persons who did not know anything about medicine. But the greater number who are not benefitted at all by the treatment, or who die, victims of criminal omission, are never mentioned in those reports.

I have seen some of the Christian Science "cures,"—I dare say more than our friend, Wade, and while I have not the slightest objection to his proclaiming what he believes to be the facts, he can hardly expect me to accept that belief against what I know to be the fact, not because I read it, but have seen it myself. I have more faith in my own senses than in the revelations of Mrs. Eddy and all the saintly virgins in the world. Alameda, Calif.

*(By denouncing the organs and method of procreation, on which the perpetuity of the human race depends, as immoral, the believers cast reflections upon the creator who made them and charge him with being lewd and obscene.)

Among the books reaching our office is one, "The Good, the Beautiful, the True," a book of poems by C. G. Brown, of Ithaca, N. Y., a graduate of the Northwestern and Cornell Universities. The splendid little poem which appears on our first page in this issue, is used from it by special permission of the author, the work being copyrighted. The title of the book is also conferred upon the leading stanzas, while Freethought, or anti-orthodox views, premeate its every page. While some of the poems have a personal note in their lines, the majority are upon general topics, and many bold thoughts are tastefully expressed. The book contains 150 pages, with five illustrations, including portrait of author, and 58 poems. There is an air of boldness in many of the thoughts given, which put a decided charm into the lines. We have been pleased with the opportunity of reading it, and recommend it to our friends. It sells for \$1 per copy. Address the author.

What the Christian Believes

If the Christian Religion Was Right and True in the Centuries Past, It Must Be Right and True Today.

(By J. Atwood Culbertson.)

The Christian believes that 5913 years ago there existed but one immense vacuum; that in this vacuum some place was a god, or the vacuum itself was a god. How long this god was a resident of the vacuum is not stated. One day this god took a notion to create and started out on a week's labor. Whether this crime was the giving way to the impulses of a moment or a premeditated affair, has not been revealed or recorded. His first work was that of making the little insignificant planet commonly known as the Earth, which he made the first day, a creating record which did not last long. The second and third days a few finishing touches were put on. The fourth day, the record breaker, he made the sun and moon and the stars also, a record which has never been equalled. The fifth day a few fishes and their like were created, and on the sixth day man and beast were made. On the seventh day he rested.

The Christian believes that man was made on the sixth day, male and female. He also believes that man was not made male and female on the sixth day; that only a single man was at first made, who was blind. This blind man was placed in a certain garden known as Eden, where god brought unto him all the beasts and fowls on earth, and the man, familiarly known as Adam, named all of them. As Adam did not find among all these beasts an animal suitable as an helpmeet, he was lonesome. Therefore, god caused a deep sleep to come upon him, and while poor Adam was asleep the all-wise performed the first surgical operation on record and took from Adam a rib of which the female was made. This outlet Adam called Woman, later naming it Eve. Eve, like Adam, was also blind.

Adam had been told that he could eat of every tree in Eden except of the tree of knowledge, but there appears to be no record of god having told Eve not to eat of this tree. And at the solicitation of a certain serpent that had the gift of speech, Eve was induced to eat of the fruit of this tree, after she had seen that it would make one wise, was pleasant to the eyes and good as a food (don't forget she was still blind), and after she had eaten she gave to Adam, who also ate, and their eyes were opened, and they saw their nakedness and were ashamed, and they knew good and evil.

The Christian believes that because of the above crime committed by Adam and Eve, all men are born in sin; that is, totally depraved, and must die. In order to be saved and have everlasting life they must be "born again", which is to say, believe unfeignedly in all the tenets of orthodox Christianity, and be baptized in the name of the father, the son and the holy ghost.

To the good Christian there is no question about the serpent having talked with Eve, but when the serpent lost its speech is a matter of conjecture. At any rate, to acknowledge the truth of the Christian doctrine is to say that had Eve not eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge all her posterity would have been going about blind and naked idiots.

According to Christianity, in a short while god became very much displeased with the inhabitants with which he had peopled the earth, and to erase his very serious mistake, he gathered together a certain family, and a certain number of each of the two hundred twenty-two thousand two hundred two-two differ-

ent kinds of animals, reptiles and insects, placed them in a little craft, which was about the size of a wash-tub as compared with some of our present day ocean liners, closed the one window and one door, and sent a flood. After all the corrupt people on earth, as well as the dumb animals, bugs and reptiles, had been destroyed by the before mentioned flood and the waters had subsided, the first complete menagerie was turned upon the earth.

This circus manager was named Noah. The posterity of the Noah family proved to be no better than that of Mr. and Mrs. Adam, and god had to resort to other means to regenerate the people of the earth. To do this he sent his only begotten son to redeem the sinners of the world.

The Christian believes that this son, known as Jesus Christ, and many aliases, was born of a virgin named Mary, conceived by a ghost, was crucified, dead and buried; descended into hell, and on the third day rose from the dead, and some five weeks later ascended into heaven, and now sits at the right hand of god, the father almighty. If a virgin would go to any Christian today with a like story she would not be believed, yet Christians will accept this time-worn story without question.

Further, the Christian believes that to doubt any of the above unreasonable rot, is a crime that should be punished by eternal torment. And in order to mete out sufficient justice to all those who do not accept the tenets of their preachings, they believe that their god has prepared a place known as hell, into which all those who have not been regenerated, shall be cast and burn eternally in an unquenching fire. Why do they believe such rot? Because in a certain book which they believe to be the inspired word of God, hell is promised to the unbelieving and heaven to the faithful. About this hook, most Christians differ very materially, each interpreting it differently, giving us the sorry spectacle of fallible man trying to interpret an alleged infallible book infallibly.

The hell idea is the most infamous doctrine that was ever inflicted upon a people, the very enormity of such a punishment being a crime beside which all other crimes sink into insignificance. The perpetrators of such a doctrine who dethrone reason and install fear instead, commit a crime against intellectual liberty of the first magnitude. And while Ingersoll has scared the devil pretty much out of the sermons of preachers, and turned a quenching stream of reason upon the crackling fires of the Christian hell of fire and brimstone, the preachers of today know that they will have to capitulate soon unless they keep alive a spark of fear within the bosom of the people, and to do this they are at work, heart and soul, to establish a hell of mental anguish. This in opposition to the first conception of hell as depicted by early paintings where men are seen writhing in a fiery furnace, while others show men in aerial flight toward the golden city.

If Christianity emanates from an infallible head, what was true of it in its incipency should be just as true today. If it was right according to Christian principles to burn heretics in the 16th century, it should be right according to those same principles today. If the Inquisition, thumb-screw and rack, Christian institutions, were right centuries ago, they should be just as correct today. And if witchcraft had the sanction of an infallible church in the time of Moses up to the 17th century and later, it should have the sanction of the same institution today.

But why aren't all these things in operation now? Because the principles of Christianity do not emanate from an all-wise and infallible head, and because the majority of the people have become infidel to such doctrines, broken away from the clutches of bloodthirsty priests and denominational sky-pilots, whose one purpose is to fill the people's minds with fearful imaginations of gods and devils, collect their revenues, and send the poor credulous souls away soaked in faith. For this reason there are 58,000,000 non-church members in the United States today.

We probably have a population of 90,000,000 people. Of this number the church claims about 32,000,000, which is to say that only about one-third of the people of our country have been regenerated. According to Christian teachings that part of the 32,000,000 who die each day will find eternal happiness awaiting them, while that part of the 58,000,000 who die each day will meet eternal damnation. Most of these 58,000,000 people are good citizens who have committed no crime against government or individual, but have committed the unpardonable offense of not joining the church and being baptized—"born again",—consequently, they must be cast into hell for all eternity to expiate the one unpardonable crime of not pooling their conscience with an insatiate Christian god and so-called Christian fellow-men. Can such a doctrine appeal to any reasonable or right thinking man as being justice? Can any man, other than those blinded by a cloud of faith and superstition, respect a god who will sanction such punishment?

In our several wars many men have been killed and many more died of disease. It is reasonable to suppose that many of these men were not members of a church, thousands of whom were doubters or indifferentists. According to the so-called infallible doctrine of the Christians of an eternal hell of fire and brimstone (which they would like to discard for something not so infamous), these indifferentists, who passed into oblivion fighting the battles of liberty on the sun-bleached fields of war, will be aroused out of the calm and peace of death, and their bodies cast into a god-made hell, reigned over by a Christian devil, to fry and simmer for all eternity for having been champions of personal and intellectual liberty.

To perpetrate this damnable doctrine, Christians are asked to and do contribute liberally. On Easter morning of the present year, I attended church at the Episcopal edifice at Sewickley, Pa. The congregation at this church is rich and "fashionable." The Rector in asking for his Easter offering remarked about as follows: "Last Easter our offering was over \$1,500.00; this morning I want it to be \$2,000.00." I have since learned that the offering was \$1,824.83, and the Sunday School Mite Box offering \$200.00 in addition, making an Easter contribution of \$2,024.83 for the cause of hell and superstition.

On this Easter morning the theme of the Rector's sermon was, belief makes the man; that no man is better than what he believes, and if he was at any time better he will gradually grow to be as bad as his belief. In some respects this may be quite so, but let us turn the guns. He compared the beliefs of the Atheist, the Pantheist, the Deist and the Christian. He said Atheism breeds self-consciousness; that the Atheist knows no god, and as it is the inclination of man to worship something, the Atheist is a man-worshipper, and in denying immortality puts man on a par with animals; therefore, puts himself on an equality with the beasts. Pantheism breeds self-righteousness, as the Pantheist's god is inclination itself. Deism breeds superiority, as the Deist puts god in some remote place from earth, from which place he rules the world. Christianity, he said, is a humiliating religion, which brings god to earth and associates him with man, and makes men bow down to the cross. What better argument could Atheist or Agnostic give in their contention that gods are man-created? He makes belief make the god. The Atheist has no god because he can find none and be-

lieves in none. The gods of the Pantheist, Deist and Christian are just what they believe them to be, no more and no less. If their faith is weak, their gods are small; if their faith is strong, their gods are large.

Again, if belief is a manufactory, is a belief in the Christian god, bible, heaven, hell, etc., an angel factory? What sort of justice is it that makes belief bring immunity for crime? Will belief bring to man a guarantee of an eternal association with the monumental church tyrants of the past and present, corrupt popes and maintainers of the Inquisition?

But does the Atheist put man on a level with the beast? In death,—yes; but in life,—no. The Atheist, Agnostic and Free-thinker know that man is superior to all other animal kind. The Atheist knows that the white man is superior to the negro, just as he knows that the thoroughbred horse is superior to the jack-ass. The white man and thoroughbred horse are superior by nature, which are facts and not theories. Death is the great leveler that in time puts everything on an equal. The Christian is just as cold in death as is the Atheist, and with all the promises held out by Christianity of a glorious future life, she dries not a single tear. When the shadow of death visits the home of the Christian, as many tears fall upon the coffin as on like occasions in the home of the Atheist. Death makes the Christian see how worthless worship is; how remote the possibilities of a future life seem, and brings to him the realization of the fact that death is no respecter of religion, and that after all, as Ingersoll has said, "Nature creates without purpose and destroys without regret."

What does the Christian believe? It is hard to tell; there are so many different species. Why? Because each church believes that it has some superior manner of worship and finds some special favor in the sight of the Christian god, who on "Judgment Day" will furnish them with a box or reserve seats in the theater of the Lord. If this were not the case they would join hands.

But listen, you non-church members, indifferentists and unbelievers: Do you believe that you have committed enough wrong in this world that should you die today a god would be justified in sending you into eternal damnation in a Christian hell?

Any religion is as good as its followers make it, which is to say that all religions are man-made. For a religion to be good its maintainers must be broad-minded, liberal, honest men. Men or religions are not honest unless they give all people equal rights before the law, reason and eternity. No religion, association or society is honest if it ostracizes a man because of his belief or disbelief, so long as he does not advocate violence. Many people are better than the "ism" they profess to believe, because they have been educated to worship, and under such conditions the "ism" will soon meet with a revision. "In Things Certain, Unity; In Things Doubtful, Liberty." Think, Christian, think!

Sewickley, Penna.

We deeply regret to learn of the death of George W. Stivers, of Paris, Ky. He has been a warm and ardent supporter of the Blade for many years. His personal friendship for the late C. C. Moore; his earnest efforts for the cause of truth; his fearless stand for mental liberty, were true characteristics of his nature, and his daily life, exemplary in the extreme, was the strongest argument in favor of the eternal principles of Free-thought.

The San Francisco Materialist Association has arranged for a Prime Centennial celebration. The Blade will give a report of the meeting at an early date.

MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

THE CHURCH WAS BASED ON THE IGNORANCE OF THE
PEOPLE AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN OPPOSED TO
FREEDOM OF THOUGHT.—HEAVEN IS
HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

What progress is, has been already defined in general outlines in a preceding chapter, and it remains only to enter a little further into the details of the process. Progress is the result of evolution, the change of one form into another, better adapted to the prevailing conditions. Since life is but one continuous atomistic movement, manifested by a series of ever-changing forms, each new one descending from the preceding one, must pass through all stages. Man develops from the original type of life, the cell, and all the characters and traits of a perfect body represent additional subsequent acquisitions. All the accomplishments of mankind, called collectively civilization, are the result of acquired individual experience, transmitted upon the offspring, augmented and inherited from generation to generation. Every individual has to pass through the entire series of evolutions transpired by the whole species. A person learning a mechanical art has to begin with the rudiments, which once at an early period of history, formed the whole of this art. Science consists in the recognition of facts and their relations, and its wonderful accomplishments which we admire and view with pride today, are the result of the observations and labors of a hundred generations. The astronomer who solves the deep and complex problems of the movements of the celestial bodies, has to begin his studies with the four species which once comprised the entire science of arithmetic; the author has to learn the a, b, c, before he is able to write poetry, etc. In regard to our social institutions we find the same law of evolution. Among the gregarious animals we find a leader; the savages have a chief; the civilized nations a king or president, all from the same reason, the struggle for existence. By comparison with past times, we discovered why we call the present a progressive age, and as the essence of progress we found better knowledge and increased use of the natural forces. And how was this attained? There is but one possibility, because a nation consists of single individuals: the progress of the world must be the result of the progress of single persons. One man studies some question and discovers that the prevailing opinion is wrong; he communicates his ideas to his fellowmen, and if a sufficient number have become convinced of the truth, a practical result will follow. Copernicus discovered that the prevailing idea about the earth's shape was wrong, and that the earth moved instead of the sun, facts whose immense importance is universally acknowledged today and

has secured the discoverer immortality in history. But at the time when he lived, he did not receive much credit for the great service he had rendered mankind, and Gallileo, who held the same views, was prosecuted for having proclaimed the same truth.

History shows that every human institution is of advantage to some people who strive to maintain it from egotistic motives. The church was based on the ignorance of the people, and has always been opposed to freedom of thought and the assertion of truth which must tend to enlighten the people and render them unfit for implicit obedience. Hand in hand with the church went the worldly powers, who depend on the same "divine charter" of stupidity and brutality; still they have done more for science than the mass of the people, who has never appreciated and aided the efforts at reform of humane, enlightened men. They have rather acted like a certain dog who was cruelly maltreated by his master, and when a humane person interfered in his behalf, turned around and bit his friend. The people has never recognized its friends and the business of social and political reform has always been the most ungrateful avocation a person could choose. Only three hundred years ago it was positively dangerous to tell the truth in regard to human affairs. Those that thrived and prospered on the ignorance of the people, church and government, would prosecute the reformer, and the people would stand by and see him beheaded or burned without moving a hand for his rescue. These times fortunately have passed, but when we study the history of discoveries and inventions, we find that very few of the promoters of progress earned the reward their labors merited. During their life-time they were misjudged, scoffed at or even prosecuted, and died often in poor circumstances; but a generation or two after their death, when their inventions had been tested and found valuable, their ideas been discussed and found true, then their merits were conceded, their memory honored by a monument; people would speak with pride of them as *their* great men, and every good patriot would modestly credit himself with their deeds. People must have great men; their vanity demands it, and they come cheaper dead than alive. The Germans are particularly notorious for the mean, shabby manner in which they have treated their meritorious men. There is scarcely any invention which they do not claim for one of their nation, who died unknown and in poverty, but was a hundred years or so later rewarded with a monument by the grateful people. Notwithstanding that a poet has said that of all the earthly treasures glory was the most precious, because the name survived the body, I consider glory the poorest compensation a man can obtain for his labors on earth. He lives but once, and his comfort and happiness depend on the amount of money he earns, the only token of estimation and ap-

proval a people can give that is worth contending for. To speak of the love and respect of a people is all nonsense. Seldom is a proverb so far from the truth as: "*Vox Populi: vox dei*,"—the people's voice, god's voice. The man who uttered this falsehood must have been deaf to mistake the bray of an ass for the voice of god. What is public opinion? A chaotic, incongruous mass of single minds, who differ in almost everything, except in one point: all want to make money as quick and with as little labor as possible. Take the population of the old world, the majority is no more civilized than a hundred years ago; they do not appreciate progress nor do they accept it, but they partake of its blessings because they cannot help it. In scientific questions it is absolutely worthless, but all the same it is the supreme judge; it has the power; it represents money, and is therefore eagerly coveted by such professions that live on it, the clergy, politicians and all sorts of frauds, who seek it for the sake of money and despise it in their hearts.

Public opinion is worth the amount of money some one can make out of it, nothing more. We started out to find the truth,—about what? About ourselves, about man. We had been told in school that we were descended from a noble ancestor, a great and mighty king, who rules over the universe, the stars, the sun and the planets, the same as the kings on earth rule over land and men. And we were further taught that our parents had been disinherited on account of disobedience, and for their sins we were condemned to live a miserable life on this miserable, little earth. Our grand old ancestor took, however, still a little interest in his poor relatives and let them know through the mouth of a few chosen ones that he might yet relent and take them back to his divine realm, if they lived in a manner ordained by his agents, but if they did not obey these injunctions they would go to a place after death infinitely worse than their present habitation. These conditions were horrible; for centuries the country was reeking with the blood of innocent people sacrificed by the faithful to reconcile the dreaded god. At last a few people began to think and then, to doubt. If our great father, they argued, finds pleasure in seeing his children suffer for deeds they have not committed, he cannot be a just and good man, and we cannot see any reason why we should wish to go to him after death. They examined the documents claimed to be written by the god and found them to be forgeries and the agents to be frauds. But when they told their opinion, the false prophets denounced them as bad men, enemies of the good lord, and the people, who were too stupid to think and could not believe that these fow should be rational and free and the rest so ignorant and brutal, rose and slew them, proving by this deed that the few were right. Again and again brave men would rise for the sake of humanity, to be persecuted by the church, until at last their number was large enough to protect themselves. And now we have searched the records and find that the whole story of our noble descent is nothing but a lie, and all the alleged divine documents are a fraud. Not long ago we discovered the gen-

uine, original records of our birth in the archives of our aged mother, the earth, which prove that we have no other relations but her, her creatures and ourselves. Since then we have given up the idea of searching the universe for a heaven: we have hell on earth and here we must also look for a heaven.

But what sort of a heaven can there be on earth? Look around for people who are contented and happy,—there you will find heaven, the only one you can ever hope to attain. If you ask what is necessary for such a blissful state, examine the conditions, and you will see that some are indispensable and others only relatively so. Accordingly, among those who are denied happiness there are some who cannot be happy because they are lacking the essential requirements, and others, who possess all that is needed, but do not know how to be happy. Everybody must, therefore, try to find a heaven on earth for himself and by his actions he may help others to reach the same goal, or he may prevent them from doing so. For mankind taken as an entity, the highest state of perfection that can possibly be attained on earth, would be to apply all human energy to productive labor, to conduct the struggle of existence exclusively against nature, instead of one against the other. Progress points that way, but how far the most advanced nations are still distant from the zenith of human evolution is impossible to tell.

When we regard the useless wars, manifestations of human imbecility if which the animal is incapable, we may well ask how it is possible that such institutions exist, which demand the sacrifice of thousands for the imaginary benefit of a few. The errors of society are the errors of many, and institutions based upon them cannot be abolished before a sufficient number have corrected their ideas, which always must precede action. Investigating the evolution of mind, we found that the process of thinking is subjected to the same physical laws as the rest of the functions of the body. It depends on the perception of facts through our senses; where they are wanting there is no thought. New ideas, therefore, require new facts; new facts require labor to discover them and ascertain their relations, and time is progress governed by the mechanical law of division of labor. Man cannot act without a reason (unless he be demented) and if he is unable to find a rational motive for his own actions, he will assume an imaginary cause; that is, resort to lying. Although it is a fact that in a war the two opposed parties act each one like a dog (or at least one of them) who is set on to another dog for the entertainment and benefit of his master, and that both are losers, even the victor gaining nothing that could not be obtained without the sacrifice, this mode of reasoning is never applied by the majority. The low, animal egoism of the masses finds expression in a foolish sentiment,—patriotism or national pride. If a man says: "I am a Frenchman, American or German and am proud of it," he is an unmitigated ass. What difference does it make where he is born;

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A RECKLESS ASSAULT UPON TRUTH.

Inordinate vanity has ever and always, in all places and at all times, in season and out of season, been the stock in trade of fools.

To say that Rev. George A. Hough, pastor of the Grace Episcopal Church, San Francisco, is possessed of a replete stock of vanity, would be putting the case mildly, and before we are through with this castigation, we will show that he is even worse than vain.

Something has been said about prevaricators being in need of good memories. At times they manifest a convenient memory, but the two adjectives do not convey the same meaning. The professional prevaricator can remember many things that never occurred and they take to lying just as naturally as a duckling takes to water, not infrequently lying for the mere pleasure of the occasion. This trait in expounders of the gospel of the Nazarene is by no means rare. It is as common as fleas at a camp meeting. Paul encourages them in the art, but if there be a semblance of a monetary reward in sight, they go right at the business without any encouragement at all. From what is reported, the Rev. Hough must be classed in the latter category.

In a recent sermon reported in the San Francisco Call, a copy of which has been sent to our office, he makes a reckless assault on truth when referring to "Ingersoll's College" at

Liberal, Mo.; and uses statements in connection therewith not altogether in accord with history. As a matter of fact, Ingersoll had nothing to do with the founding of the town named "Liberal," in Missonri. It was established by a few independent, enthusiastic Freethinkers, many years ago, and succeeding in the experiment of establishing a truly liberal community, where absolute freedom of thought and liberty of conscience reigned, friends and relatives were invited to join them. Taking advantage of the opportunity, the unusual liberty afforded, in matter of religion and religious worship, the Christian element gained a foothold, and under its charter successfully claimed the right to build, establish and maintain a Christian church. This was done. The aims and objects of the Freethinkers who had settled the community were cast aside, and backed by the State, the Christians gained control. But this is not the most grievous intruth stated by Rev. Hough. Speaking of the college which he denominates as a "National Freethought College," he goes on to say, as reported:

"Its first president was a friend and classmate of mine, an exceptionally brilliant man. In three years this pet scheme of Ingersoll's was proved a miserable failure. My friend, the president, a sincere enthusiast, went lecturing about the country, preaching his doctrine of Freethought, and ultimately went back to educational work on the strict understanding that he should keep his beliefs to himself. He was finally converted."

Upon due reflection, after reading the above, we felt inclined to take the Episcopal churches of America under our wing that the several congregations might not be so flagrantly imposed on by their pastors. When Rev. Hough is able to come off his high perch of seeming great dignity, he will, doubtless, feel like asking to be recognized just long enough by honest men to apologize for his existence. Can it be possible that a minister of the gospel will not be truthful when dealing with an intellectual foe? According to his own estimation of Freethought, it is a synonym for intelligence, for does he not say that this "friend" who was also a "class-mate" of his, and the "first president" of the "pet scheme of Ingersoll's," was an "exceptionally brilliant man?" But mark the consistency of Christian advocates, they gave him a position as an educator, presumably, because of his exceptional brilliancy, but he was well charged to "keep his beliefs to himself." In other words, he must be a hypocrite in a land of liberty and freedom, or starve.

But, "he was finally converted." This is the climax. Upon that statement the curtain is rung down. The audience departs. The parson rubs his hands together in great glee, reflecting how successfully he has got the people fooled. Rev. Hough knew that his congregation did not know and he also knew that, being well trained, they would take no trouble to investigate. Christian congregations,

especially of the Episcopal denomination, are not prone to investigation. The error was in permitting such a statement to be published and thus affording those who did know an opportunity to read what he had said. In his church Rev. Hough was safe. The danger came from publicity. There would have been scarcely any point to his fabulous story unless a conversion was alleged. To have permitted an infidel, who was an "exceptionally brilliant man", to have remained an infidel, would have done his profession no good, hence, the alleged conversion.

At this point we are prone to ask Rev. Hough the name of the "first president" of this "pet scheme of Fingersoll's"? He might also state some of the places at which he lectured. When and where did the alleged conversion take place? Is this converted Freethinker still in the land of the living? If so, will Rev. Hough give his name and address that one may communicate with him?

In the first place, no "National Freethought College" was ever established at Liberal, Mo. There was, indeed, a Freethought society which held regular meetings, and it had its officers, including a president. If this is what is meant, will Rev. Hough so state? But there are hundreds of similar societies in existence throughout the United States today, so if this one became a "miserable failure" what answer can Rev. Hough give regarding other and numerous Freethought societies organized since that time and in existence and operation now? Assuming for the sake of argument that it was a "miserable failure," how many "miserable failures" are recorded concerning Episcopal churches in America. If such an argument is good in one instance, is it not also good in the other?

Rev. Hough may deplore the "atheistic tendency of the age," but if the story he has related about Liberal, Mo., be true, he ought not to feel the slightest fear. "He was finally converted" bespeaks a fearful apprehension lest a fat job should slip away from him. It is the solace of priestly fools, who, seeing danger, shut their own eyes in the hope of not having to recognize it.

But we spoke of vanity, and we asserted that Rev. Hough had his plethora of a very suspicious brand of that article. This we gather from the fact that he exploits his "party" in the paper along with the report of his sermon. Judging from his physiognomy he ought to be planting post-holes in the dark of the moon, instead of relating to ignorant congregations incidents that never had any actual occurrence, selling the truth for a miserable mess of pottage.

Such men cannot be put in the penitentiary, but if the Christian could prove his religion true, there would be some satisfaction in knowing that somewhere in this universe there was a sulphurous hell where fiends howling lie, and that the warmest section would be reserved for him.

A CHICAGO JUDGE ON EVOLUTION.

There are innumerable instances wherein the prejudices of honesty are entitled to consideration, but the judgment

of real genius will always command a respect bordering upon reverence. It so happens, however, that in this age of almost universal inquiry we cannot accept any man, however wise, as an infallible pope in the realm of intellect and declare that from his *ipse dixit* there shall be no appeal.

We are not acquainted with existing political conditions in the City of Chicago, but the suggestion comes to mind that there might be a possible approachment of an election for the office of Judge of the Superior Court, as viewed in the light of some recent utterances of Justice Kavanaugh, who is accredited with occupying a seat on that bench at the present time, and he may be seeking a re-election. If to sport and play with lines of thought foreign to his understanding and beyond his comprehension in an effort to gain notoriety by pandering to a sordid superstition, be his chosen path to fame, he will find innumerable mental microbes encumbering his journey. Jurisprudence is one thing; theology is an altogether different issue. And yet, neither jurisprudence or theology can tolerate evolution, and both refuse to progress. Jurisprudence is so eternally bound up and beliedged with precedent that it allows the past to invariably control the present, and as if by habit bent, Judge Kavanaugh permits his bias for precedent to control his opinions on other and different subjects.

According to a report published in the Chicago Record-Herald, Judge Kavanaugh recently addressed the Sunday Evening Club, whatever that may be, but we presume the character of the organization addressed by the character of the utterances made by the person thus addressing its members. As a fact, this pettifogging judge opens his mouth, vomits a few sensational remarks and vainly imagines he has felled Darwin, Huxley and Haeckel at one fell swoop. He announces his utter contempt for such creatures, and a far greater contempt for the doctrines or theories advanced by them. And, after all, the Chicago judge may be right, for the expounders of the doctrine of evolution never tried to run in his class, nor did they seek his advice or consent ere they launched on the world of intellect their views of the cosmos. Judge Kavanaugh may know the law, but it is evident that he does not understand evolution. If his legal judgments are as far from the truth as is his judgment ament evolution, he ought to last on the bench not longer than his present term. Just read:

"That mass of useless inferences, piled one on the other high, may pass in some circles as delightful scientific exposition. In a court of justice, when the right to a pewter watch was at stake, judge, jury and lawyer would call it rubbish."

And so Judge Kavanaugh would quarrel with Science because it is not yet made perfect according to his limited capacity to understand it. He might as well quarrel with music because men sometimes produce a discord. On the other hand, he is ready to accept that a virgin was conceived by a spook and produced divinity in the shape of man. Were some young girl's character on trial before him

and she offered testimony of a similar character, we opine Judge Kavanaugh, the lawyers on either side, and the jury, if one were impanelled, would pronounce it even worse rubbish than the Chicago theologico-jurist puts upon physical Science. It would not be to our liking to be impealed before such a judge. His rank prejudice would be good grounds for a change of venue and the aid of the law to that end would be speedily invoked. Nor could we trust the ownership issue of the pewter watch to such an arrant bigot. It seems that Judge Kavanaugh is unable to realize the fact that truth will live in spite of his ravings, even if it be contempt of the judicial prerogative for evolution to establish itself without consent. Some years ago we witnessed an egotistical bull-pup hop astride the collar of an adult wild-cat, and the woeful result convinced us that judgment and ambition should blithely foot it hand in hand. After reading Judge Kavanaugh's strictures, our opinion has been confirmed. But read further:

"The moderate evolutionists, like Darwin, allow heaven the privilege of having created life, but limit its activities to four or five progenitors among the animals and less than that among the plants. The radicals, like Haeckel, regard god as a capricious interferer with their theories."

Any man who could give vent to such an expression might be expected to deliver a dissenting opinion upon the proposition that three times one makes more than one. He would be willing to denounce men of Science as mere adventurers, but is unable to tell whether Jonah was a duly appointed delegate of the deity or an erstwhile Chicago jurist. It is doubtful if he could discover an original thought without the aid of a search-warrant. Neither Darwin or Haeckel ever took god into consideration when making their investigations into scientific fact. If god reigns, as Judge Kavanaugh appears to believe, then evolution is a frightful lie, and those churches now claiming evolution as god's plan, are guilty of promulgating what is known to them to be untrue. As opposed to Judge Kavanaugh's assertion, it is impossible for any god to "interfere" with evolution, which disposes of his criticisms concerning Haeckel, while Darwin announced spontaneous generation and natural selection as the law of life, which cut heaven out of the creation business altogether. But if "creation" be a fact, we ought to be thankful that Judge Kavanaugh was not employed as a model in the man-making factory. Such a man would deny the sun because of its spots and declare love for a monster because encompassed with passion.

It is a self-evident fact that this Chicago judge will never set the woods on fire by reason of what he knows. What he does not know would fill a much larger book. There is a probability that he would like to get back on the bench again when his term expires and that he is living in hope would deny the sun because of its spots and declare love a monster because encompassed with passion.

Pitiful god! Must thou really depend upon such services?

Of course, Judge Kavanaugh believes that "design" is apparent everywhere in the boundless universe, and he declares: "If there be design evident in the creation of the universe we shall live again."

Design! Where? In the grinding poverty that exists in Chicago, under the very walls of the court-house? Was there omnipotent design in the elevation of such a man as this to the judicial bench? When the universe is but a vast slaughter-house, each organism warring and preying upon a weaker antagonist in the struggle of existence, can a benevolent purpose, or design, be inferred even? Logically, this Chicagoese is but groping among the pestilential shadows of an intellectual Dismal Swamp, mistaking shadow for substance, and attempting to criticise his intellectual superiors by a questionable bid for notoriety. If existence, as it is now known, is the work of design, then the designer is an infernal monster, a bloody butcher, a gigantic criminal unworthy even the association of an honest man. He may do for a Chicago judge to keep company with, but self-respect compels honesty to turn the other way.

With these thoughts expressed, we revert to the statement contained in the first paragraph hereof, and venture the assertion that Judge Kavanaugh is not a genius who would command our respect, neither are his prejudices entitled to the slightest consideration, because they cannot be honest.

THAT GREAT CONSPIRACY.

Judge Ladd and other able writers, whose contributions have appeared in the Blade columns, have made reference to the Great Conspiracy, and this is especially understood as applying to the maneuvers of the professors and paid advocates of the orthodox faith in adopting what may be known as Utility methods for the promotion of their own interests at any cost to personal liberty.

We may rightly conclude that among these methods is a secret understanding to compel, as far as possible, an exploitation of their ancient traditions before the public by a prolific use of the daily press and to this end no effort is being spared. In some instances a pandering press is only too willing to comply with their demand, the better to fill the sails of an expected rich Argosy, and as a result we see columns of orthodox commonplaces in the daily paper, which pass by unread and unheeded by thousands of the American people. Some newspapers use this matter as a means to economy. Take, for example, the series of orthodox publications known as the "International Sunday School Series," a weekly contribution to many newspapers. The mats from which these are printed are furnished free of cost and expense, which saves the publisher from the necessity and expense of setting type, and they come in handy as fillers, under the general belief that the religious element will appreciate it and admire the paper and its editor the more for having used it. Did the editor know that to ninety-and-nine out of every one hundred of his pa-

trous such matter is nauseating, he would realize that it was simply a waste of space and a different policy might ensue. We may, however, take it as a truism, that if the newspapers had to pay for the article and then pay out money for putting it in type, it would never get into the columns of but exceedingly few of our modern papers.

Aside from this, reference might be made to the habits of many preachers, especially those of an evangelistic stripe, who, from their pulpits denounce the Sunday paper, but frequently prepare a synopsis of their Sunday sermons for the Monday morning papers, well knowing that the printer must labor Sunday night to get it into type. Honesty would impel a retaliatory denunciation of this as being an arrant hypocrisy, but the indifference of the reading public is largely responsible for it all. But we need not rest here, for so anxious are this class of preachers for notoriety that the moment the service of Sunday night is over and the congregation safely in retreat behind the doors of their homes, this same preacher, who decries Sunday labor, hies him to the newspaper office with his manuscript copy in hand and lays it before the editor with flattering mention that he has conferred a boon that is not to be estimated in dollar and cents. Careful instructions are given as to the particular part of the paper in which he would like it to appear, and an introduction is demanded which is laudatory of his "great eloquence" and his "remarkable power" in spreading the gospel which "carry conviction." All this is a part of "The Great Conspiracy" to destroy liberty and enthrone the religious mendicant. These things are perfectly understood by the "profession" and not infrequently they come up for discussion at minister's meetings, when "press committees" are appointed whose duty it be to secure the widest possible publicity to their labors for Christ and the Cash.

One glance over a collection of our modern daily papers will be sufficient to convince any intelligent person of these facts. Take the antiquated details of "Week-day Sermons" prepared especially for the occasion; the sayings of this or that preacher upon different topics; the reports of meetings, etc., and the public will know, as it must, that all these things have been "furnished" the press by personally interested agents, for no paper of any pretension would ever send a reporter to secure it as "News." Every orthodox convention, by whatever name and wherever held, appoints its special committee on publication, and these prepare just what is wanted for the press, giving details in many instances, that never actually occurred. From one to three columns of this preparation get into print for the mere purpose of keeping the preachers before the public eye, realizing that otherwise, nine-tenths of the community would forget they were living.

Nothing desires, or needs, false notoriety so much as a fake. Taken from public notice and attention, a fake will soon die. The constant and increasing use of the daily papers by orthodox superstitionists is for the sole purpose of striving to impress upon the minds of those in govern-

mental authority a notion that orthodoxy is exceedingly popular, and once such a condition is made, repressive legislation is rendered easy. After this, wheel begins to work within a wheel. The preacher directs all this to the attention of the politician. He promises him votes and influence in return for legislation. The bargain is made. Liberty is bartered away and a nation's rights betrayed. This corrupt combination cannot much longer endure. It may continue for a few more years in fancied security, but the day and the hour will come when the people will revolt against both.

In this great day, when right receives due recognition, the pandering newspapers that helped to make such conditions possible will get caught in the maelstrom, and then, after us, the deluge.

Bible and booze are the pet hobbies of Rev. Francis Caruthers, pastor of the Presbyterian church at New Waterford, Ohio. Nor does the jewel of consistency rest upon his brow. Condemning the use of booze by texts from the bible and drinking liquor on the sly was his long suit. But he has tripped and fallen. During the recent local option fights in the Buckeye State he made an active canvas against booze. March 17th last, he was arrested and jailed upon a charge of being drunk. His defense was, the liquor men had doped him. His own church people refused to believe him, and now they have suspended him for one year on the charge of conduct unbecoming a minister.

A fitting companion is found for the preacher mentioned in the preceding paragraph, in the person of W. F. McNulty, an evangelist hailing from Binghamton, New York State. He was found stretched across the sidewalk by the police in Chicago, paralyzed drunk, and upon being locked up he admitted that he had been drinking, but allowed that the western brand of corn-juice was exceedingly deceptive, and he had drank more than he had intended to do. He was picked up at 2 o'clock in the morning.

The argument to be drawn from the foregoing is that some preachers are saintly saints at home, but once beyond the limits of his place of domicile he lays aside his mask, bares his heart and becomes what he really is. Denying to other men the privilege of regulating their appetites, he demands to be given the privilege of getting outside all the red liquor he comes in contact with.

In spite of the scriptural mandate that woman must keep her head covered before the Lord, or when in church, the First Baptist Church, at Elgin, Ill., has adopted a rule, which is now being enforced, requiring all women in the congregation to remove their hats. Just wait until Paul gets a chance to put in a word, or after all, are the people beginning to realize that the preacher is not really an almighty god, or divine law can be disobeyed without any serious consequence resulting. In a little while other extravagances will get the marble heart.

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MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY.

he has neither created the earth nor his country; he has not made it what it is and he cannot change it. What reason has he to be proud of something others have done and of which he enjoys the benefit through the accidental circumstances of his birth? The laws of society are the same all over the world and the most a person can do is to live in a manner that the country may be proud of him. Among

a progressive minority this prejudice does no longer exist, and they judge a person by a personal, not by a national standard. For the ruling classes patriotism is necessary, for they owe their privileged position to this stupid sentiment. The subjects need it because they are too ignorant to understand the true cause of these social relations; they are proud of their nationality, because they have nothing else to be proud of; it flatters their small, vain egotism.

(To be continued.)

"In the Shadow of the Cross"

Expose of a False Picture.—While Priestcraft Flourishes There Will Be Fools for Christ's Sake.

(By Channing Severance.)

Presumably many of the Blade readers have heard of the much-talked-about painting with the above name, for it has been carried about the country for more than ten years, proclaimed as an inexplicable product of mortal man without supernatural assistance.

To describe it, will say: It is a painting of the mythical Jesus, and when exhibited in a dark room a large cross, not visible at other times, is revealed distinctly.

To make an interesting story for the credulous, it is claimed the artist accidentally discovered this phenomenon, and being unable to account for it, never put the finishing touches on his work. He claims to have been so mystified that he could not do otherwise; but he was not so saved by the thought that supernatural forces had helped him in his work that he did not think of the money value to be gotten out of it. Oh, no; that came to him like a flash of inspiration; and the idea has been worked for more than ten years under the claim that the money thus obtained was for the Shanghai missionary fund, which of course, exerted great influence in its favor, for all Christians are deeply interested in the souls of Chinamen and their salvation. There is no doubt it has been as good as a gold mine, for thousand and thousands of people have paid to see it and are still paying; and over three hundred sermons have been devoted to its wonders and mysteries, so it has not lacked for advertising. And furthermore, a wager of \$5,000 (without putting up the money) has been made by various parties that no person could duplicate it. But it has been duplicated by Bishop Garrison, the noted exposé of fake mediums and

clairvoyants; and he is now exhibiting his duplicate in this city, with luminous paint to account for the other fellow's miracle. The press, favorable to such fakes, has published such rot as this: "The painter has been offered fabulous sums to reproduce the picture, but though he has worked hard constantly and continuously for a year, he has utterly failed to obtain any luminosity whatever."

Yet Garrison got busy and in a few days he excelled the miraculous painting by improving on it. With one exception, the press of this city is notably silent on Garrison's exposure, but he has located on one of our main streets, with two good talkers from the Liberal Club to assist him, he is attracting considerable attention from the public, and his work has caused the managers of the fake picture to present it to visitors in a much more modest manner. In a visit to the "real thing" yesterday, I found them rather testy and not inclined to talk about the picture; and when the man in charge of it made his usual address to the sight-seers, he said:

"I present this picture as a curiosity, and if the word miracle is applied to it, it is in the sense used by Webster's dictionary—a wonder, or wonderful thing;" and he furthermore requested that every one refrain from expressing an opinion of the picture while in the room, no matter what it might be.

When such fakes as this can be worked in this, the 20th century, it is not flattering to general intelligence; and when we see the press and the pulpit working together to bamboozle the simple-minded and the credulous, it produces disgust that is too great to find expression in words. It is not surprising that during the thousand years the world stood still, the masses believed implicitly in religious humbugs, but how they can in these days of light and knowledge is a marvel; but people who think and reason clearly and who know

the value of common sense, are not found save in rare exceptions, where theological nonsense perverted their minds in childhood.

So while priestcraft flourishes we will have "fools for Christ's sake" in unlimited numbers.

Los Angeles, Calif.

THE JOGUND AND CHURCH REVIVALIST.

(By J. E. Burkbart.)

You may have been converted
 And you may have some acquaintance
 And seen demons in the air,
 With the resurrection scare;
 But brother of Dame Nature,
 Shake nightmare from your mind,
 Stir up your innate courage,
 Your headlight's on behind.

You may be full of spirits,
 And prayed a lot at night,
 But it's best to tell the people
 That you were on a "tight."
 Now don't forget to say it,
 It's Christian-like to tell,
 And then you'll feel persuaded
 That you are saved from hell.

In the midst of Christian habits,
 It's hard to call it sin,
 But you're none the less a hero
 Should you elevate your chin.
 Then face the caustic glances
 Of the prayerful ones you know,
 The thinking ones will trust you
 When you let Superstition go.

Wants Extra Copies

MODESTO, CALIF.—Inclosed please find 15c, for which kindly send me a copy of the Blade of the issue of February 28, March 7th and March 14th. I have a copy of February 21st, containing the first installment of the poem, "Death," and desire the other three installments.—LAWRENCE BROADWELL.

The Blade's Correspondence

Discusses Scientific Topics.

KANAWHA FALLS, W. VA.—Please send me two or three extra copies of Blade of May 16th. My article in that number "The Evolution of a Planet," is based on Heald's "Procession of the Planets" theory, which, while ridiculed by many orthodox scientists and astronomers of the old school, seems to me a more rational and plausible theory of the origin of planetary systems than the nebular theory, or the ring theory as we might term it. The glacial period through which our earth is conceded to have passed many thousands of years ago, it seems to me is a striking proof, or at any rate a strong argument, in favor of the idea that planets move inward toward the sun with increasing orbital speed. I expect to send you later a short article on this subject. I hope you will feel quite free to dump any of my stuff into the waste-basket that you do not consider of sufficient interest or benefit to publish, except when I request return of it when not used. I take it that the Blade circulates chiefly among and is read mostly by avowed Freethinkers (unorthodox people). Many really good church people think it is a sin even to read an avowed Freethought, or as they call it "infidel" paper. Might it not be well to make the Blade a little more of a weekly news and family paper, but a thoroughly independent one, retaining all its present features and policies, but adding thereto a brief summary of the important news of the week, some miscellaneous literature suitable for the young and old in the family. It seems to me that this would commend the paper to a wider circle of readers. Some would take it for its Freethought, anti-orthodox matter and some for its news, educational and miscellaneous matter. Incidentally the gospel of Freethought would be brought to the notice of this last named class, and probably cause them to investigate and think for themselves. We don't want to teach anything but truth and what is at least reasonable, and this is bound to prevail sooner or later, and Freethought become as popular as orthodoxy now is.—J. C. WATKINS.

For Campaign Purposes.

TULAROSA, TEX.—Will you please inform me whether you could print me 100 copies of the article entitled "Prayer Answered", which appeared in issue of Mar.

14th. I find it a very good propaganda article. What would it cost per 100 to print? If printed, I would like it in sheet form, that it might be posted in public places. I enclose herewith some comments on the teachings of the churches, that "In the Beginning God Existed." I do not know whether you will consider them worth giving to your readers or not, but they express my condensed views on the subject. Long live the Blade!

COMMENTS.

"In the Beginning God alone existed." The author of the above evidently had not advanced far enough to recognize the fact that all matter moved in cycles. But if God alone existed, then God and Nature must be one and the same, as Nature was and is bound to exist at all times; and as there never could have been a beginning in the sense intended above, then Nature must have existed at all previous periods of time. As matter exists and is indestructible, God must be matter which is the visible manifestation of Nature; therefore matter has always existed in some of its various forms and was never created, as something cannot be made from nothing.

Now, matter being Nature (natural) or God, if we should worship anything we should worship all Nature by studying her and her laws as manifest around us every day.

But Nature and God being one and the same, man is a part of God, and he makes himself ridiculous by begging whole, which includes himself, to protect him from the wrath of the whole, or of any part thereof.—WM. J. HOWERTON.

Send Them When Ready

CALEDONIA, MICH.—I herewith enclose to you two clippings from April 11, '08, and April 24, '09, issues of the Progressive Thinker, from my pen, thinking you might wish to copy portions of them. I beg to explain that owing to the extreme difficulty of getting such articles published in journals which reach the mass of the people, resort must be had to organs more restricted in purpose than to please the common herd of itching ears,—hence my mention of spiritism in these articles, when personally I am not an advocate of modern spiritualism. Could you use an article from my pen, especially written for your paper, dealing with Romanism as a political question? If so, please send

sample copy that I may not deal any more harshly with the question than the policy of your paper will warrant.—HARVEY W. JACOX.

We Adopt This Suggestion.

MARSHALL, ILL.—It is not for me to dictate what or what not shall be your business policy, but I know from experience that in rural communities like my own, it is very hard, almost impossible, to get clubs of five for the Blade. I suggest that if you can possibly do so, that new subscriptions be taken at \$1.00, regardless of the number sent in. I can foresee no other way to double the circulation of the Blade. What few subscribers you have here you owe to my interest in the Blade. I think I could pick up a new one now and then at \$1.00, but in fives is practically out of the question. Once we can get them I think we can hold them. What conditions are true here, no doubt exist elsewhere. I hope to see something relative to the matter in the Blade.—J. H. SCHWARTZ.

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ALTOONA, PA.—For the enclosed 25c, will you kindly mail me a few samples of the Blue Grass Blade, and oblige?—WM. D. GABLE.

Sends for Two Years.

DIAMOND, PA.—Enclosed please find \$3.00 to apply on my subscription to Blade up to June, 1910. Please excuse me for neglecting this. If I live until the 22nd of this month I will be 81 years old (or rather 81 years young); perhaps that may have something to do with my neglecting to renew when I should have done it. I have taken the Blade for a long time, and have been a Freethinker ever since I was 8 or 10 years of age. Have read and thought a great deal on the matter. I have good health and enjoy life. All I wish to live for now is to see the world improve and people become more happy. If you have the Blades on file, turn to volume 15, number 34, of Sunday, November 25, 1906, and there you will find a piece headed "A Pleasant Sunday, Titusville, Pa.," that gives a fair statement of my life and surroundings.—J. H. ALCORN.



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